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## THE QUESTION OF EPIRUS

*By N. J. Cassavety, General Secretary of the Pan-Epirotic Union in America*

Among the many thorny questions which will pay their unwelcome visit to the delegates of the nations seated around the Peace Table, the question of Epirus will be a distinguished one, for it will involve not only the necessity of reconciling the two small nations immediately interested in it—namely, Greece and Albania, but also the need of satisfying a great power—Italy.

In 1913, the ambassadors of the great powers at London, yielding to the pressing demands of Italy and Austria, created the principality of Albaniano, and awarded to that principality the district bearing the name of Northern Epirus, or Southern Albania, which was occupied by the Greek army.

Under pressure, and with bleeding heart, Mr. Venizelos ordered the evacuation of Northern Epirus. But the Greek nation never renounced her claims. The Christian population of the district, almost wholly Greek, resented their subjugation to Albanian domination, and opposed Prince William of Wied by force of arms.

The Albanians divided themselves against one another; Essad Pasha plotted against his prince; Colonel Thompson, of the Dutch gendarmerie, was assassinated in front of the palace; the Prince of Wied fled; and Albania fell into its customary and inevitable condition of anarchy.

Mr. Venizelos fearing for the fate of the Epirotes at the hands of the wild bands of Guegues who had been mustered by the Prince of Wied, beseeched the great powers to allow the Greek troops to reoccupy Northern Epirus. Italy was propitiated by a simultaneous permission granted to her by the powers to occupy the valuable port of Avlona.

Thus matters stood at the outbreak of the European War. At Athens, and in fact, everywhere, it was believed that one thorny question had finally been given a happy solution. It was maintained that Greece would hold Northern Epirus permanently, that Italy would establish herself at Avlona, and that Albania would be put under the tutelage of the Great Powers of the Entente. It seemed as if Italy acquiesced to this solution of the Epirotic question, when suddenly, those deplorable events took place in Greece, the expulsion of Mr. Venizelos from power and the unfriendly attitude of Constantine toward the Allies.

The Greek forces were ordered demobilized and transferred to Peloponnesus. Italy, immediately thereon, extended her forces to the South from Valona and occupied Epirus as far down as Jannina.

It was not until after the return of Mr. Venizelos to power in 1917, that Italy withdrew her troops to the north of Jannina, occupying to this day that portion of Epirus which had been awarded to Albania in 1913, and which the troops of Mr. Venizelos had re-occupied in 1914.

Every sign tends to strengthen the conviction of the Greeks, and the Epirots, that the Epirotic question is not definitely settled. Italy indicates her determination to have Northern Epirus included in the state of Albania. And the Epirots are determined that no such attempt shall ever be crowned with success. Hence, we are led to believe that the question of Epirus is not a question to be relegated to a secondary place in the consideration of the American people who will be called upon to assist in the happy solution of all intricate racial problems.

We have reviewed briefly the history of the Epirotic question. In fact, the history of this question begins with the year 1913, when Greece and Serbia, by the defeat of Turkey, were coming to the right shores of the Adriatic. Until 1913 the Epirotic question was not in existence. The Albanians satisfied with their privileged position they held under the Turkish Empire, did not seek independence. They did not desire to be separated from the Ottoman Empire. Occasionally only did they rise to arms to prevent the Turks from

subjecting them to taxation and to compulsory military service. Nor have the Albanians as a whole a conception of national unity. Mr. Reginald Wyon wrote in the *Blackwoods Magazine* in April, 1903:

As to the people themselves, spoken of collectively as Albanians or sometimes as Arnauts, the idea gained thereby of a united nation is quite erroneous. They must first be divided into three, according to the three religions, namely, Mohammedans, Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christians. These three religious factions constitute three entirely different peoples, each animated by fanatical hatred of the other; and they can be subdivided into clans and factions ad lib. As each clan can be reckoned as a miniature autocratic kingdom, ready at any moment to go to war with its next door neighbor, the anarchy existing all over Albania can be faintly imagined.

And Mr. Caillard wrote in *The Fortnightly Review*, of April, 1885:

In spite of their close blood-relationship, they are bitterly hostile towards one another. The Ghuegs look down upon and despise the Tosks, who, in their turn, view the Ghuegs with jealousy and dislike. It is acknowledged unreservedly by both that they cannot live together. They are continually quarrelling, and often civil wars result.

Dr. E. J. Dillon wrote in the *Contemporary* of April, 1903:

Each tribe hates the other with religious rancour, although the line of cleavage does not always run parallel with religious tenets.

And again, Mr. Wyon wrote in the *Blackwoods* in April, 1913, "Roman Catholic Albania:"

The numerous clans live absolutely independent of each other, some in blood-feud, where they shoot each other at sight whenever they meet. Sometimes the slaughter is great: at others, they are content with half a dozen killed on each side.

We might adduce innumerable expert testimonies, had our space permitted, to impress the fact that Albania was not created because the Albanians wanted a kingdom. In fact, the Albanians did not care for a united Albanian kingdom, and as we saw they did not long delay to cause its dissolution.

Who, then, created the Albanian kingdom? We take from the *Literary Digest* of May 6, 1915, the following quotation translated for the *Digest* from the publication *L'Italie* published in Rome. Pieter Kakaviqui, secretary of the marshalship at the court of Wied wrote:

Albania being, in fact, the creation of the Triple Alliance, it is on the lot of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies that its future political existence depends. Not only the head of the State, but every Albanian citizen, without distinction of religion, should feel compelled to fight on their side, in recognition of the liberators of Albania.

Mr. Wyon wrote in April, 1913, in the *Blackwoods Magazine*:

It is to be remembered that a ceaseless agitation is in progress, chiefly on the part of Austria (through the priests) and of Italy (by means of the schools) to gain influence.

And again, in the same publication Mr. Wyon wrote:

The time will come when at least two of the Great Powers will have to seriously consider the Albanian problem, who are both vitally interested in its solution.

In the *Literary Digest* of February 21, 1914, we read:

Austria-Hungary and Italy may regard the new kingdom as a chess-board for playing their game of rivalry in the Adriatic.

In the *Spectator* of May 23, 1914, we read:

Perhaps, the chief obstacle to a working arrangement in the Epirote lines is that Italy does not approve of it, and so we come back to the fact that Italy's presence in Albania is a very significant thing. It is useless to prophesy. There is a mess; Austria and Italy may try to use that mess to their own profits.

We hardly think it is necessary to say more on this point. Albania was created by Austria-Hungary and Italy, in spite of the Albanians.

There is no doubt that after 1913, the appetite of a few Albanian nationalists has been whetted to demand Epirus for the imaginary Albanian state.

But the Epirots, although abandoned by the unwilling government of Mr. Venizelos, resolved upon resistance to

the end, irrespective of whether they should meet Albanians or the Triple Alliance as their opponents.

The Ambassadors at London submitted to the inexorable insistence of Italy and Austria to include the Northern Epirots in the New Albania. The public in France, England, and America recognized the injustice done to the Epirots, and the injury to the new Albanian state, for, the revolution of the Epirots precipitated the downfall of the New Kingdom. The *Spectator* wrote in April 11, 1914:

Northern Epirus has been spoken of as the Ulster of Greece. When the powers decided to create an independent principality of Albania, they did not include Northern Epirus within its boundaries without any reason. It was because they could not agree on any other solution, and merely accepted the place that divided them least. But, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that as Northern Epirus is largely Greek, the Epirots object to the decision of the powers.'

And again:

The rising which is now embarrassing Prince of Wied, and causing him to contemplate taking the field at the head of an Albanian Army, was only to be expected.

It is true that men of Greek race, and speech in Northern Epirus are cut off from their natural affinities.

We have so far adduced the testimonies of eminent authorities to establish the truth of our contention that the Albanians have no national feeling, that Italy and Austria-Hungary were the instrumentalities for the creation of the Albanian kingdom, and that their motives were, as Mr. René Puaux says in his introduction of the *La Malheureuse Epire* "to make Albania as large as possible in order that they may divide it up between themselves later on;" or as Mr. André Chéradame writes in his *Douze ans de Propagande en Faveur des Pays Balkaniques* in order to embarrass Greece and Serbia, and to embroil the Balkan Allies into a civil strife."

We have, also, produced testimony as to the ethnological character of Northern Epirus, but, seeing that every dispute of an ethnological character will be solved as far as it is consistent with fair justice and feasibility, on the principle of

nationality, we deem it our duty to utilize the remainder of our paper in bringing additional authorities as to the ethnology, numbers, culture, traditions and the national aspirations of the people of North Epirus.

"The oracle of Jupiter was established in Epirus before the deluge of Deucalion by the Pelasgians who built him a temple. The Selles were his priests" (Herod. II, 54).

Achilles, the Thessalian addresses Zeus as follows: "Jupiter, King of the Pelasgian Dodona, in the vast abodes, God who presidest at Dodona, where the cold winters reign; around your altar live the Selles, your interpreters, who never wash their feet, and sleep on the ground." (2 III. Book XVI, 233 and following.)

It would have been strange, indeed had the Epirots remained unaffected by the Hellenic culture, with thousands of Athenians visiting the oracle of Dodona. If the Epirots were not originally Hellenes, as in fact they were, they surely were Hellenized.

Pyrrhus was completely Greek, as Plutarch tells us. The coins of Pyrrhus bear Greek inscriptions.

When Paulus Aemilius defeated Perseus, Epirus fell to the Romans, and Duruy says, "Two thousand carriages loaded with statues from Macedonia and Epirus passed through the streets of Rome." Had Epirus been barbarian, she could not have possessed the art treasures which the Romans brought to the Imperial City.

Never before the arrival of the Turks had Epirus, as far North as Durazzo (Dyrrachion) formed one country with Illyria, modern Albania. Turkey joined Northern Epirus to Albania in the fifteenth century, and the Southern in the year 1800.

In 1806 Ali Pasha Tebelen became the first Albanian Pasha in Epirus. His proverbial villainy and cruelty are known. To him Epirus owes the Islamization of its inhabitants to the North. His aim was to Albanicize Epirus, but he did not succeed. The patriotism of the Epirots was more violent than the violent measures of Ali to extinguish it.

In 1885, V. H. Caillard who visited all Epirus, wrote in the April issue of the *Fortnightly Review*:

As for the Epirots they may be considered *purely Greeks*. Their language is Greek, their names are Greek, they are thoroughly Greek in thought and feeling, habits and religion.

We were met all along the road by deputations of villagers from far and near who prayed that at least they might be included in Greece.

The whole country seemed to ring from end to end "Viva Gladstone!" Mr. Gladstone was looked upon as the saviour of their country, the man in whom they trusted for coming prosperity and happiness, for reunion with their real fatherland.

We asked the inhabitants if they were satisfied with the existing régime. "No!" was the reply. "Our only remedy is to be joined to our mother—Greece. We have nothing in common with Albania. Taxes may be heavy in Greece. Yet, we should have improvements!"

"Our names are Greek, all names are Greek here, because in ancient times Epirus and Greece were one, and they should be so now. But it cannot be forever—our hope is in Mr. Gladstone."

If these are not considered sufficient proofs of the popular yearning to be united to Greece, we might go back into not remote history and remember that the Souliotes, a chiefly Greek-speaking tribe of Epirus, were not only continually at war with the Albanians, but were among the first to commence the Greek War of Independence, and that Bozzaris, of their numbers, was the greatest of heroes who fell in the early part of the terrible struggle. Epirus has, in fact, been Greek in all essential points from time immemorial, except only in name; it is to be hoped that, one of the most essential points to her, may be ceded to her soon.

Leake, Pouqueville, Hobhouse, who travelled through Epirus, are teeming with testimonies of the Hellenic character, and Hellenic aspirations of the Epirots from Avlona to Preveza.

But the Albanophiles object to such statements. They say that Northern Epirus must be considered Albanian because a large portion of the population speaks Albanian.

To these objections we consider our duty to oppose without acrimony the disinterested opinions of men like Dr. E. J. Dillon. In the *Contemporary Review* of April, 1903, he wrote:

For the past ten years or more the Albanians have been slowly extending their territory, and without serious opposition. The



Christians who occupied their own land were either killed off or driven away in large numbers from the Villayets or Provinces of Kossovo, Monastir and Salonica.

Thus the chivalrous brigands have succeeded in forming the majority of the population, and where they are in minority they are predominant, seeing that they carry weapons and know how to use them, while Christians, Serbs, Greeks, and Bulgars are by law unarmed.

The land-owners dwell in fortified houses, their retainers are armed to the teeth, and the wherewithal to live is furnished by the Christians—Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars, who wise in their generation, lay in corn, fruits and money, which the enemies enjoy. The Malsia tribe, for instance, is supported, almost exclusively by the proceeds of organized depredations on the Christians who try to live and work in their neighborhood.

In the *Fortnightly Review*, in 1885, F. P. Caillard wrote:

In 1806, Ali Pasha Tebelen became the governor of Epirus. It is hardly necessary to say that misrule and oppression soon began. In a short while Ali had confiscated most of the property worth having, and had transferred it to some of "My Albanians." The Epirots protested to the Porte. On failing to obtain redress, emigrated en masse to Zante.

Ali was bitterly reprimanded, and recalled the Epirots, but soon he reconfiscated their lands and gave them over to his "Albanians." Nevertheless, Ali's attempt to Albanicize violently the Christian Epirots had no practical success.

From the foregone quotations it is easily understood that the Christian Epirots who were of Greek race, and of Greek sentiment, under the savage oppression of Turkey, and of the Albanians, were reduced to the condition of slavery. The educated Greeks fled the country; the wealthier went to live in the Heptanese, at Athens, or in the Peloponesus; and the paysants, in order to mitigate the fury of their oppressors tried by all means to hide their national feelings, and to learn the language of the Albanians in order that they might the easier beguile them. Thus the language, as it has recently happened in Alsace-Lorraine, under persecution has been altered. The Greek Epirots were forced to learn to speak Albanian and to forget their mother tongue, as the younger generation in Alsace-Lorraine is forced to learn German and to forget the mother tongue—the French. Other such examples of oppressed nationalities, which have altered their languages but not their national feelings are

the Armenians, who, for the most part, speak Turkish; the Greeks in Brussa, who likewise speak only Turkish, and the Danes in Schleswig-Holstein. Language, therefore, is not the test whereby we should judge the nationality of the Northern Epirots, although almost all of the Northern Epirots today speak Greek.

So much for the national aspirations of the Northern Epirots. We shall conclude this article by producing statistics about that portion of Epirus claimed by Greece as rightfully belonging to the Hellenic patrimony.

The frontier proposed by Greece in Epirus would leave to her the Vilayet of Jannina, the sandjacks of Jannina, Prevesa and Goumenitza (or Rechadié) in full, the larger portion of the sandjack of Argyrocastron, and, in the sandjack of Korytsa, the cazas of Korytsa and of Colonia in full, and about half of the caza of Starovo.

These territories contain a population of 477,383 souls of whom the two-thirds are Greeks and the other third Mussulmans, or to be more accurate, 316,651 Greeks and 154,413 Mussulmans, without taking into account 5,104 Jews.

Upon an analysis of these proportions, it is evident that in the most important districts, the majority of the Greek element reaches in the caza of Pogoni 96.4 per cent, in the sandjack of Prevesa 91.7 per cent, in the sandjack of Jannina 88.6 per cent, in the caza of Delvino 75.2 per cent. Elsewhere the majority of the Greek element falls below this proportion of 2 to 1; in certain districts the two elements are about equally balanced; in a very few others, finally, the majority passes over to the Mussulman element.

The table given here below shows the detail of this distribution in the different districts.

These numbers are drawn from the statistics compiled in 1908 by the Ottoman Government in view of the parliamentary elections, in order to determine the number of the electors and that of the deputies to be elected. Such statistics, if they do not always conform to the real proportions between the two elements, cannot be construed as biased in favor of the Greek element. The truth is that they have been compiled in the same anti-hellenic and gre-

cophobe spirit which ruled all the dealings of the Young Turks during the preparations for the first elections. It is, therefore, probable that the numbers compiled do not exaggerate the preponderance of the Greek element.

Further explanation should be made. The table appended below shows as Greeks, not only those who speak Greek, but also the Orthodox Christians who, while speaking the Albanian or the Coutzo-Vlach, are, and call themselves, and wish to be Greeks. They represent about one-third of the total element indicated as Greek.

As we have dealt a little earlier in this article with the linguistic question, we will only add that language is not a safe criterion for the distinction of ethnic elements. Albanophone Greeks speak Greek as well, and can read, write and transact business only in Greek. The same holds true of the Coutzo-Vlachs. Nobody denies today that the only safe test of nationality is conscience and the will of the individual.

Greece, confident that the Northern Epirotes desired union with her, proposed to the International Epirotic Committee to have a popular referendum applied, in order to determine the will of the majority. "But Austria-Hungary and Italy rejected this plan. They feared that Greece would win" writes Mr. Rene Puaux in *La Malheureuse Epire*.

In the comparison which will be made in the table below as regards the ethnic elements, it is not sufficient to note that the Greek element represents two-thirds of the population, although that fact in itself is adequate to confirm the rights of Greece to claim the regions where her sons preponderate. It is also necessary to add that if Greece will be forced to annex some few thousands of people of non-Greek character, it must not be forgotten that the frontiers are so drawn as to leave within Albania considerable numbers of her children.

The boundaries proposed by Greece take in 154,413 Mussulmans, but at the same time leave out 44,119 Greeks.

The territories claimed by Greece are Greek, not only on account of the inhabitants; they are Greek also on account

of the Hellenic civilization, which has already joined them to Greece by the ties of thought and sentiment.

*Table of population of the vilayet of Jannina*

DISTRICT	GREEKS			TOTAL GREEKS	MUSSUL- MANS	TOTAL POPULA- TION
	Greco- phones	Albano- phones	Vlacho- phones			
Jannina.....	72,674	1,400	10,800	84,874	5,032	89,906
Metsovon.....	5,882			5,882		5,882
Liascovikion.....	6,100	2,624		8,724	4,584	13,308
Prevesa.....	12,542			12,542	1,854	14,396
Louros.....	20,162	1,100		21,262	882	22,144
Margariti.....	1,400	8,812		10,212	18,426	28,638
Philates.....	17,340	250	100	17,690	11,276	28,966
Paramythia.....	9,936	2,600		12,536	4,704	17,240
Argyrocastron.....	13,178	7,916		21,094	21,032	42,126
Delvinon.....	12,231	4,155		16,386	5,450	21,836
Cheimarra.....	3,865	3,383		7,248	4,750	11,998
Tepelen.....		5,846		5,846	15,566	21,412
Premeti.....		9,500	2,128	11,628	18,530	30,158
Pogonion.....	18,615		2,381	20,996	810	21,806
Total.....	193,925	47,586	15,409	256,920	112,896	369,816
Corytsa.....		43,800	1,214	45,014	53,919	98,933
Total.....	193,925	91,386	16,623	301,934	166,815	468,749

\* Ottoman government statistics by Amadori Virgili, 1908.

We now come to the culture of Epirus:

*Table of statistics of schools in Epirus*

NAMES OF SAND JACKS	NAMES OF KAZAS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS			NUMBER OF TEACHERS			NUMBER OF PUPILS		
		Greek	Roumanian	Italian	Greek	Roumanian	Italian	Greek	Roumanian	Italian
Jannina	City of Jannina.....	(8)	(1)		(60)	(2)		(1,467)	(35)	
	Jannina (incl. City of Jannina).....	258	2		334	8		9,417	63	
	Metsovo.....	8			20	1		482		
	Konitza.....	31			36	3		1,089	22	
	Leskoviki.....	34			36			1,118		
	Filiatai.....	34			33			1,302		
	Paramythia...	32						732		
	Total in the Sand Jacks..	397	2		459	12		14,140	85	

*Table of statistics of schools in Epirus—Continued*

NAMES OF SAND JACKS	NAMES ON KAZAS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS			NUMBER OF TEACHERS			NUMBER OF PUPILS		
		Greek	Roumanian	Italian	Greek	Roumanian	Italian	Greek	Roumanian	Italian
Argyrocastro	Argyrocastro..	50			59			1,916		
	Delvino.....	24			33			1,063		
	Premeti.....	35	1		39	1		1,118	18	
	Tepelen.....	18			22			589		
	Himaza.....	8			14			507		
	Pogoni.....	42			57			2,061		
	Total in the Sand Jacks..	177	1		224	1		7,254	18	
Preveza	Preveza.....	32			40			1,254		
	Louros.....	36			36			1,180		
	Margariti.....	30			31			681		
	Total.....	98			107			3,115		
Berat	Berat.....	18			28			769		
	Scraperi.....	1			1			24		
	Lousina.....	25			29			623		
	Valona.....	10		2	16		5	435		40
	Total.....	54		2	74		5	1,851		40
Total in the vilayet.....		726	3	2	864	13	5	26,360	103	40

School and church maps and statistics by Amadori Virgili, 1908. "La Questionne Rumeliota."

From the preceding table we see that Greece has 726 schools for boys and girls. Three of these are colleges for boys (Jannina, Konitsa, Korytsa) and one is a college for girls at Jannina. We see that Greece has 900 teachers, male and female, and pupils attending schools to the number of 27,000, which represents 9.2 per cent of the entire population. If we take into consideration the fact that the Mussulmans dislike schooling and they never send their children to school, we should compute the percentage not on the total population, but on the Greek population only, or on the 270,000 which would give us 10 per cent. Very few countries among the most civilized can show a nobler educational effort. And this effort acquires a more striking

significance when we know that the Ottoman Government had been ever so suspicious of the Greeks as to check the educational ardor of the Epirots. Yet what has Roumania accomplished with all the lavish expenditures to detach the Coutzo-Vlachs from their allegiance to the Hellenic ideals? In twenty-five years she has succeeded to establish only three schools in Epirus, with 13 teachers and 103 pupils over a total population of 22,000 Vlachs. Over an equal period of time, Italy has only 2 schools, 5 teachers, and 40 pupils. *As to Albanian schools, there are none at all.*

On the other hand, Greek culture without any subsidies from the Kingdom of Greece, spread itself in full vigor enlightening not only the Greeks, but also the Turks and the Jews. At Jannina, Konitza and Koritza the Turks and the Jews attend the Greek schools, Essad Pasha is a graduate of the Greek College of Jannina.

But even more strikingly Greek is the work of the Church. There is not in Epirus one village, no matter how small, but it has one or more churches, and one or more priests. This moral education prepares, completes and prolongs the instruction received at the schools. And along side with the churches have sprung up the monasteries, which served as a refuge for the persecuted, and as a school which perpetuated the Greek language, and the Greek traditions. There are 49 monasteries in the sandjack of Jannina, 12 in that of Preveza, as many in Himara and others in other sandjacks, or 189 in all.

There are in Epirus eight metropolitan episcopates, as follows: Preveza, Paramythia, Jannina, Argyrocastron, Conitza, Corytsa, Berat, Durazzo.<sup>1</sup>

These episcopates are also the supervisors of all the charitable institutions in Epirus.

But it is private initiative that has distinguished itself in the works of charity, which have made the Epirots famous all over Europe. The Epirots, oppressed by the Turks and the Albanians, left their homes early in their boyhood and went to Russia, Roumania, Egypt, Austria, England and

<sup>1</sup> Oecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Erpiscopates in European Turkey (Map).

Marseilles, where they amassed large fortunes. Their first thoughts as soon as they became rich, were to donate to Greece, or to their native towns their large fortunes for the erection of schools, hospitals, orphan asylums, museums, and churches. At Jannina the largest hospital is due to the generosity of a patriotic Epirote. Likewise the orphan asylum at Jannina is the gift of an Epirot from the contested portion of Northern Epirus. The Greek College for Boys is due to the Yanniot Zossima, and the College for Girls to Naxios. At Prevesa, Argyrocaastro, Paramythia, Delvino, Metsovo, Lambovo, Konitza, and other cities of Epirus, one will see the princely gifts of Averof, Zappas, Zographos, Bancas and Anagnostopoulos (a Boston citizen).

Everywhere the traveller in Epirus will see the fruits of culture, and will feel the force of Hellenic civilization. The inhabitants who are proud to call themselves Greeks, are Greeks not only by blood, and sentiments; they are Greeks also by mentality, by civilization and by the love they cherish for Hellas.

We have only given a few testimonies of writers of well recognized ability, and of unassailable veracity to prove that the Northern Epirots are Greeks, not Albanians.

But the Albanian organizations in America and England insist that the decision of the ambassadors at London in 1913 shall be respected. According to that decision the greater part of Epirus is to go to Albania, and the Greek districts of Argyrocastron, Korytza, Chinara, Premeti, Pogonion, Tepeleni are to be sacrificed to the Albanians.

The Albanians as a whole are not responsible for such an imperialistic attitude. The very large mass of the Albanian people do not care for an Albanian state. They would welcome the Turkish rule which left them to their tribal independence.

The so-called Albanian movement is the work of a few Albanian chieftains who have fled their own country, pursued by antagonists.

These self-styled Albanian leaders have created a circle of sympathizers in England and in America, whom they deceive by false representations.

These Albanian "leaders" have special stories of Greek and Epirotic atrocities in order to rouse the sympathy of England and America for Albania.

We quote from the *Manchester Guardian*, October 2, 1914, the following by its Balkan correspondent, C. S. Butler:

I have read in the *Guardian* of July 22, of shocking atrocities alleged to have been committed against Albanians by Epirotes. Having served as a British war-correspondent both in Macedonia and Epirus in 1912 and 1913, I feel constrained in the interests of truth to rebut these charges, which are either wholly untrue or grossly exaggerated. Mr. Aubrey Herbert is a brave and honorable man, and I quite believe that he and that plucky English lady, Miss Edith Durham, spread these tales in perfect good faith, on the strength of the testimony of Albanian refugees and residents at Valona and Durazzo. But they make a very great mistake in launching these horrors in the British press without having verified them by a visit to the locality itself. I happen to know that Mr. Herbert has repeatedly been invited to visit the Epirote borderland, in which these atrocities are alleged to have been committed, but he has not gone. Miss Durham has apparently only made one hurried visit to Koritza since the journey, which forms the subject of her well-known little book and on which, to judge from that same book, she succeeded in travelling the northern fringe of Epirus without coming in contact with a single Greek inhabitant. Is it fair, then, to condemn the Epirotes unheard, when nothing would have been easier than to verify the truth of the astounding tales related in the *Manchester Guardian* and brought up in the House of Lords on July 28?

We shall adduce two more witnesses of international repute as scholars and as men of honor and impartiality; Hon. W. P. Reeves, Ex-Governor of New Zealand, and Z. D. Ferriman, author and journalist.

Mr. Ferriman wrote to the *Daily Chronicle*, April 3, 1914, from Jannina:

When Athens sat in darkness, the appanage of a eunuch in the Seraglio at Stamboul, Jannina was a focus of Greek learning, and the travellers in the early nineteenth century tell us of scholars like Athanasius Psalida. Byron met one of his pupils at Athens in 1811, and wrote of him that he was "better educated than the fellow commoners of most colleges." I had heard of Lucas Via, of John Valeras, and other natives of Jannina who brought to it the culture of the West, of the Schools of Psalida and the Zozimas, of Sakellarios and Coletti and Metaxa, but Dr. Georgitsis told me much more, among other things of the school founded by the brothers, Philanthropinos in 1650 which flourished for more than a century.



This does not sound extraordinary as it is put down here, but if we try to realize the barbarous environment amid which these things were accomplished, and the savage tyranny which essayed to thwart them, the achievement is little short of marvellous. It is a matter of wonder that Epirus has had to wait so long for her emancipation whilst regions which deserved it less have long enjoyed it. But not all Epirus is free. Districts as Greek and as cultured as Jannina, Argyrocastro and Moschopolis, where a printing-press was established nearly 200 years ago, are excluded because a company of gentlemen seated around a green table in London have drawn a line on a map and decreed otherwise.

I am writing this in the house of Dr. Georgitsis. His fourteen year old son, Sophocles, is seated opposite to me doing his lessons. He is at the Gymnasium, the high school, which has existed for well-nigh a century amid incredible difficulties. His schoolfellows of the senior class are not here. They have gone to join the hierolochitai, the sacred bands, to fight, if need be, for unredeemed Epirus. So has the Doctor's nephew, who was residing lately at West Norwood. So has the best young blood of the country.

I shall meet some of them, for I leave today in order to try and give some account of the land which has been handed over to a factitious State created to satisfy the covetous aspirations of two European powers.

The Honorable Pember Reeves, in a letter to the *Daily Chronicle* of April 11, 1914, defends the Epirotes who rose and fought the Albanians, declaring their independence.

The honorable writer asks "What are the Epirotes fighting for?" And answers:

They are not asking for justice; that of course, would be union with Greece. They ask for the guarantee of a tolerable existence.

The Great Powers are supposed to be deciding what they will do. Already certain European papers are clamoring that international forces be used in Epirus—in other words, that the Greek Epirotes should be shot down.

Before the "Shoot 'em down!" policy is considered, much less adopted by the Great Powers, I would appeal to you and to your readers to scan these terms put forward by the unfortunate Epirotes. I would ask them to consider whether the demands are excessive, coming as they do, from an educated, civilized, Christian people who, to please Italy and Austria, and for no other reason, are being forced under the rule of Moslem savages, whose chief industry is professional brigandage. It is usual to compare the case of the Epirotes with that of the Ulster Protestants, but the analogy, though by no means fanciful, is anything but exact.

Nobody proposes—at the dictation of Austria and Italy—to expel the Ulster Protestants from the British Empire, or to put

them under a foreign flag. Ulster has not been proclaimed a part of some savage country, say Morocco. No one has suggested that her people should call themselves Arabs or Abyssinians, that they should lose the protection of the British Army, of fleet, or be regarded as aliens by the British Parliament. They are not to be ruled by a German prince or deprived of votes and parliamentary institutions. The Irish Nationalists may have their faults, but they are civilized Christians. The roughest of them are not brutal bandits, whose hands during the past eighteen months have been red with the blood of Ulster peasants. Mr. John Redmond has many critics, but his bitterest enemies have never likened him to Essad Pasha. I would invite you and any fair-minded reader of yours interested in the matter to inquire into Essad Pasha's record. When they have ascertained it they will, I am convinced, agree that in refusing to place themselves, their wives, children and property, under the despotic rule of such a person, the Epirotes are only striving for the primary rights of man. For Essad Pasha is just now the virtual ruler of Albania, in so far as Albania has a ruler at all.

Such are the Epirotes whom the Central Powers had resolved to place under the rule of New Albania.

Whatever may happen to Albania, and we hope that she will be reorganized, and made into an independent nation, we are certain that at least America will not permit a thoroughly Greek population "more Greek than the Greeks themselves," Rene Puaux, *La Malheureuse Epire*, to pass under the dominion of a foreign nationality—much less under the dominion of the Mohamedan Albanians, who hate the Epirotes and who, in their turn, hate the Albanians as heartily.

Epirus, as far as had been occupied by the Greek armies in 1913, is in preponderance Greek. Whatever certain interested powers may have decided in 1914, the United States will do justice to the brave and long-tried people of Northern Epirus, who ask nothing more than to be allowed to be united to their mother country—Greece.

"Truly, few countries of Greek character merit as much as Northern Epirus, to be called, and to be Greek." Rene Puaux, *La Malheureuse Epire*.